

REBELLION IN LABOR RANKS

Back of the strike of railway men is the personal grievance of one man, John Grunau. He was a yardmaster, and operated a work train, which carried employees from Chicago to the railroad yards at Bensenville. A passenger coach was added. The railroad's officials claim that a regular conductor there by became a necessity, and Grunau was displaced. He organized a rebellion, and out of that rebellion the strike grew. The presidents of the railway brotherhoods pronounced the strike illegal. It has been conducted, therefore, in defiance of their orders.

The manner in which it has been carried from Chicago into other cities shows very clearly that the strikers as a rule either do not know or do not care what it is all about. In many instances—in most of them, probably—the occasion has been seized upon to demand increased wages. It matters little to them that the movement engineered by Grunau is illegal from the standpoint of their own union organizations. They fling principle to the winds and on their own hook call loudly for more pay.

This rebellion, therefore, is a revolt within the ranks of organized labor. The spirit of resistance to the authority of their own leaders has been gathering strength for some time. Radicals have preached it. Revolutionaries have openly boasted that they intended to capture the unions by "boring from within." Leaders—Mr. Gompers among them—have feared the stealthy work of sympathizers with the Reds, the Communists and the I. W. W.'s. Whether fully cognizant of the fact or not, the truth is that the strikers are playing the desperate game of the radicals.

Aside from the great annoyance and losses which the innocent public suffers, the importance of the contest lies in the challenge of union men to the leadership of their own unions. There can be no stable organization that is not under discipline and will not abide by its own rules. Union labor is menaced, not by "capital," not by employers of it, but by its own membership. We witness the spectacle, therefore, not of railroad officials striving to break a strike, but of the chiefs of the railway brotherhoods trying to break it for them. It is a fight between law and order and disorderly procedure on the one side and the unrestrained elements of unrest and radicalism on the other.—(Philadelphia Inquirer.)

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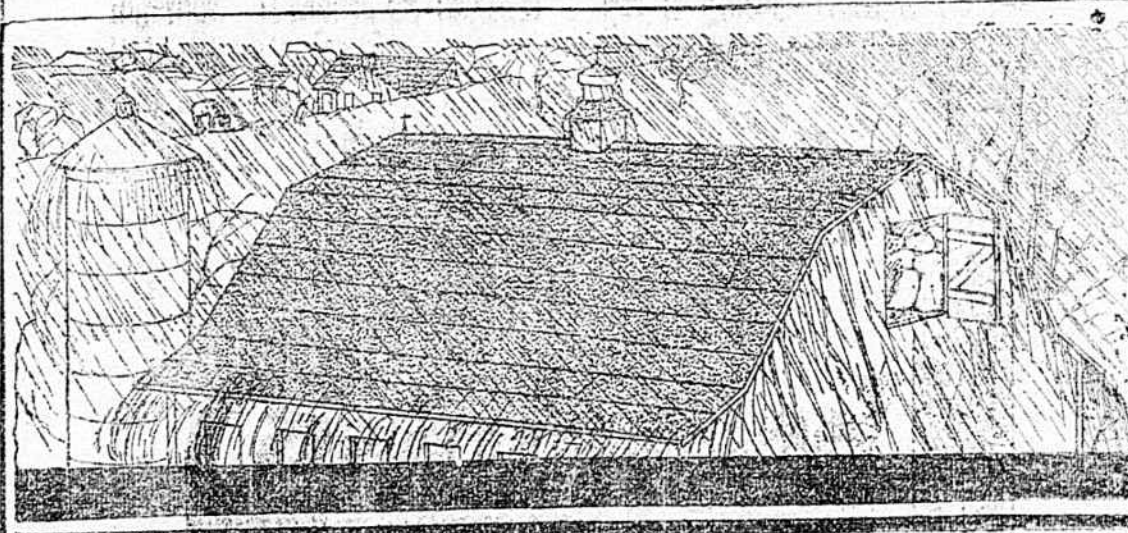
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